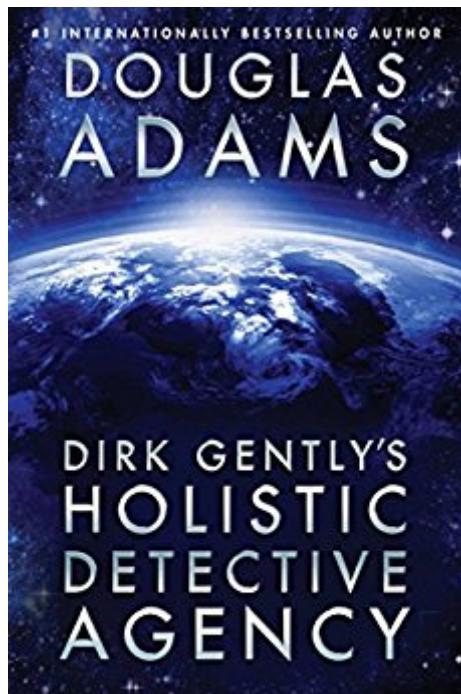


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Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency



Synopsis

From Douglas Adams, the legendary author of one of the most beloved science fiction novels of all time, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, comes a wildly inventive novel "in trade paperback for the first time" of ghosts, time travel, and one detective's mission to save humanity from extinction. *DIRK GENTLY'S HOLISTIC DETECTIVE AGENCY* We solve the whole crime We find the whole person Phone today for the whole solution to your problem (Missing cats and messy divorces a specialty) Douglas Adams, the "master of wacky words and even wackier tales" • (Entertainment Weekly) once again boggles the mind with a completely unbelievable story of ghosts, time travel, eccentric computer geniuses, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the end of the world, and "of course" missing cats.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"In fact," says Dirk Gently, "everything between 'herring' and 'marmalade' seems to be missing." Dirk Gently is an example of a breakthrough work: An attempt at something quite artistically new, which is all the more amazing because it actually succeeds. In short, this novel is: a Science Fiction Mystery Comedy.* DG is a quite good Science Fiction book, with elements such as strange alien technology ("The Electric Monk"), time travel, and an immortal -- if VERY absentminded -- being*

DG is a quite good (and, to borrow another reviewer's term, "self-consistent") mystery/detective novel, even if the detective in question IS rather unorthodox!* DG is a very funny comedy novel, which parodies not only the detective genre, but also makes not-so-subtle jabs at ivory-tower academics, business executives, British Telecom, and computers (and the geeks that use and program them) Dirk Gently as a character in particular is a truly original creation. It is both very fortunate that we have him in two novels, and cruel and tragic that Douglas Adams did not live to develop him any further. For one example, many of Dirk's college friends think he is psychic, and are always trying to get him to dream-speak upcoming exam questions. Dirk sets out to prove them wrong by creating a complete copy of an upcoming exam, purely by researching past exams in the same course, studying the syllabus, etc., figuring that he will be only about half right on average, and everyone will see that he is just an ordinary guy and leave him alone. Except that the exam he so produces turns out to be identical to the real one. Oops.

Having finished with the Hitchhiker's series with So Long And Thanks For The Fish, Douglas Adams created a diptych utilizing the character of Dirk Gently, an eccentric character who in this first novel creates the self-titled Holistic Detective Agency. His method does not involve using fingerprint powder, but rather seeing the fundamental interconnectedness of things. As he elaborates to a client, "I see the solution to each problem as being detectable in the pattern and web of the whole. The connections between causes and effects are often much more subtle and complex than we with our rough and ready understanding of the physical world might naturally suppose." Missing cats is a specialty, using Schrodinger's quantum mechanics equation. It also serves to exploit old woman seeking their missing cats of their money, that is if he ever gets paid. Gently cross paths with his old classmate from St. Cedd's College, Cambridge, Richard MacDuff, who is having a trying and interesting time. MacDuff, a computer programmer working for Way Forward Technologies, becomes involved with his old college tutor, Professor Urban Chronotis, the aged Regius Professor of Chronology, and hence bearing the nickname "Reg" whose vice is conjuring tricks, and in the middle of a dinner honouring Samuel Taylor Coleridge, performs a totally inexplicable one involving a salt shaker and a Grecian pot that perplexes MacDuff. Equally perplexing is how a horse entered the bathroom of his professor. MacDuff has many other things to worry about. He's overdue on a software programme for his boss Gordon Way, he isn't spending enough time with his girlfriend Susan, who's his boss's sister, and he's got a sofa lodged halfway up the stairs to his flat.

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